

## Duxbury's 1st and 2nd Land Divisions

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Social Security in the 17th century amounted to having as many children as possible. The hope was that at least one of them would take care of you in your old age. Take, as an example, John and Priscilla Alden who had 10 children. It was their fourth son who stayed on the farm and took care of his parents. John and Priscilla had about 500 great grandchildren.

So, with a great expansion in the size of these settlers' families, there was a corresponding need for more land for their survival. Several of the Pilgrim leaders "bought" large tracts of land in places like Middleborough, Taunton, Bridgewater and other towns, some as far away as Rhode Island, Connecticut and Maine. They then divided those parcels into smaller "lots" for farming purposes, some of these lots being more than 100 acres.

Duxbury in 1627 had been divided into lots along the shore (which I covered in previous Duxbury Clipper stories), leaving the rest of the town as Common Land. At that time the town included Pembroke and Hanson. Duxbury divided most of the Common Land into 40-acre lots in 1710 (First Division) and into 35-acre lots in 1713 (Second Division). At the time of the Second Division, Pembroke (with Hanson) was set off from Duxbury.

My effort in the coming months, possibly years, is to cover these Divisions by neighborhoods. I'm afraid that I would not make it researching each individual lot as there were more than 300 and I'm 83. The neighborhoods include: Littletown, Ashdod, Tinkertown, West Duxbury (High Street), Millbrook, Bailey's Corner, Tarkiln, Island Creek Pond, North Hill and some I haven't discovered. I have left out the shore areas because I have covered them in previous stories and hope to cover them in more detail in an upcoming book. If anyone has more information about other neighborhoods or, more specifically, the source of the name "Littletown," I would welcome the input.